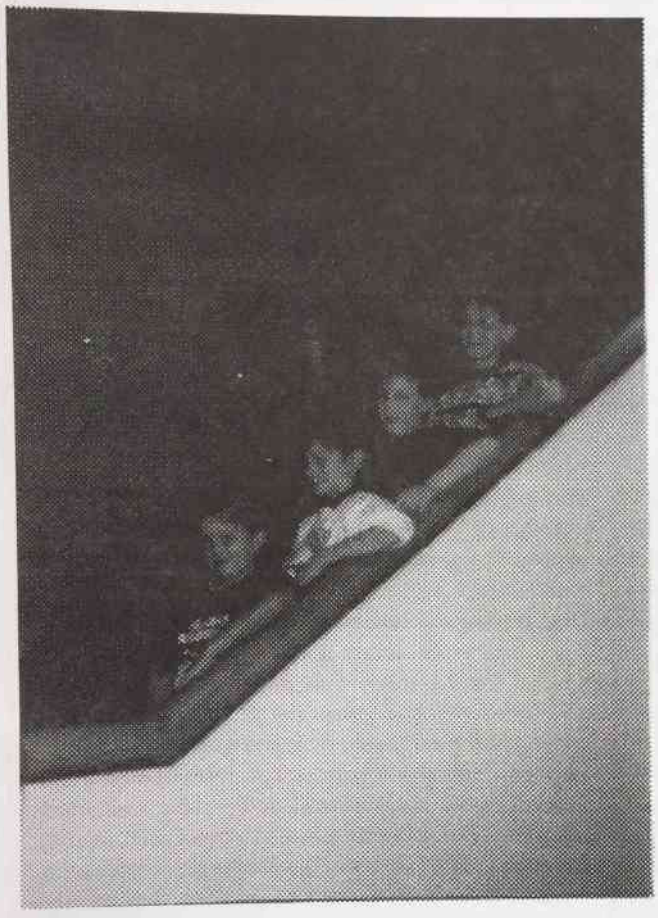
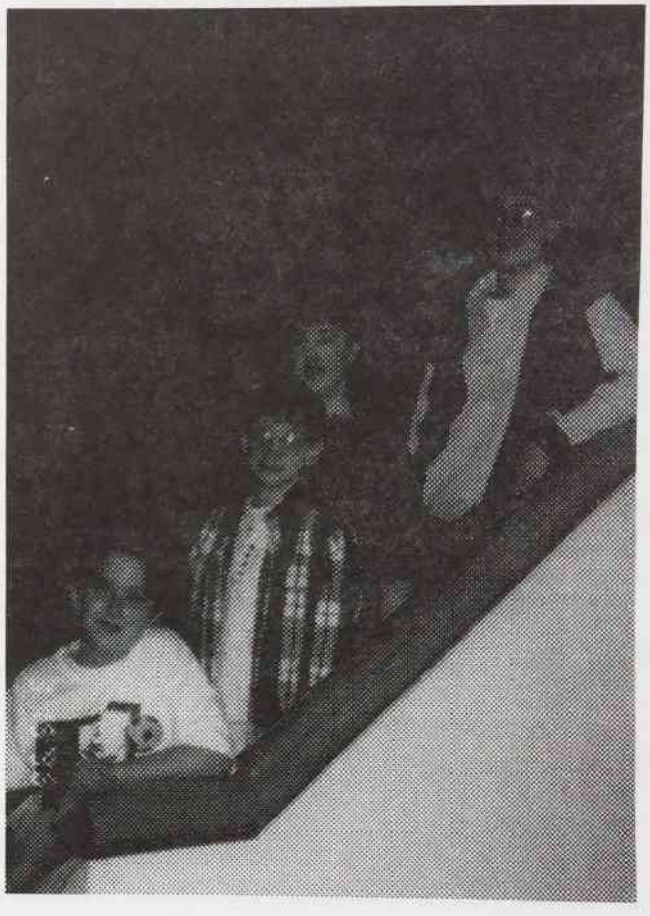
Alabama Chess Antics

February 1997 **$3.00**





September 4, 1993

Andrew Whatley	1908	#5, 11-12
Matthew Puckett	1740	#14,11-12
Daniel Thomas	1460	#23, 9-10
Andy Reeder	1450	#26, 9-10

March 15, 1996

Andrew Whatley	2137	#7, 13-14
Matthew Puckett	2205	#3, 13-14
Daniel Thomas	1967	#8, 11-12
Andy Reeder	1966	#9, 11-12

Pictured above are some (but not all!) of Alabama's top scholastic chessplayers. The numbers to the right of each name are United States Chess Federation ratings, followed by the player's position in the USCF top 50 list for the player's age group.

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From the Editor
by Rhodes Peele

"...in home analysis it is very easy to be unobjective. To fight this tendency ... it is useful to publish your individual analytical work ... annotation of games for the press, is a sure method of arriving at perfection."

Mikhail Botvinnik
100 Selected Games

In this issue of *Antics*, Bill Melvin concludes his saga on breaking the 2300 barrier with five well-annotated and interesting games. Andy Reeder offers a wonderful analysis of his win over Andrew Whatley from the Magic City Open. Bobby Edwards's article on the State Championship is the first of a series of historical columns he has expressed an interest in writing. There is news about what is happening in the ACF, a controversial perspective by President Melvin on developments at USCF, and many tournament announcements and reports. The issue is 32 pages long, tying the record set last time.

As usual, many people contributed, and not all of them are listed as authors in the Table of Contents. I hope future issues will be as good as this and the last one. My main concern is that only a small number of players have contributed annotated games. It is unrealistic to expect that these few will not tire out at some point, and anyway, *Antics* should showcase the best or most interesting games of as many players as possible. I hope more *Antics* readers will take heed of Botvinnik's advice in the quotation above and send in one or more of their best games for the May issue. Even unannotated games are welcome.

I think that good chess analysis should be the focus of the *Antics*, and that the quantity and accuracy of such analysis is one reasonable measure of the newsletter's quality. Obviously, other kinds of chess material, such as tournament announcements and reports, is also important. Please send in lots of articles by **April 5** so that the next issue will come out on time and will be read and enjoyed by many ACF members! And please support Alabama chess by **renewing** your ACF membership and **playing** in Alabama chess tournaments! The next major tournament is the **25th Queen of Hearts,** display ad page 10. Hope to see you there!

President's Message *by Bill Melvin*

Please address your attention to the label on your *Antics*. Note the expiration date. If your membership has expired, then this is the last *Antics* you'll receive. This issue is a special mailing to include everyone whose membership expired in 1996. It is not practical to continue mailing to expired members. So, this is it. We mean it. But, we **want** you to renew. Please please renew! Just fill out the handy form on the back and send in your money. The car repairs can wait. What you really need to experience true happiness is a current ACF membership.

I can't believe I just wrote that!

Everything is running smoothly within the ACF. The recent Executive Board Meeting (highlights elsewhere) was especially productive and satisfying. Rhodes Peele, our humble Editor, is now free to concentrate on editing duties as Jack Mallory has accepted the duties for a newly created Secretary/Treasurer position. It appears that a Editor/Treasurer position was a mistake which put too much work on one person. I told you the new Board would make some mistakes. Well, we made one but corrected it already, so there!

The ACF is in good shape on finances, a quality *Antics* is being delivered on time, and morale seems pretty high. I only wish we had more members. I'd like to see 1000 members (including 400 regular members) in the ACF. Any ideas on achieving this goal are most welcome. **Really**, I mean this. Please don't assume I've heard it all before. I haven't.

How many members do we currently have? We have 55 regular members and 186 scholastic members for a total of 241 members. This isn't many. The USCF gives a kickback to the states of $1.00 per regular member and $0.40 per scholastic member to promote chess. For 1996 - 97 in Alabama, this included 298 regular members and 81 youth members for a total of 379 members. Contradicting this, however, is the U.S. Chess Policy Board newsletter which states that Alabama had exactly 906 USCF members as of September 30, 1996. Does this mean that we have 527 life members? I seriously doubt it. These numbers really don't make sense.

Regardless of how many USCF members live in Alabama, I would like to see more ACF members. We'll gladly accept members who are not members of the USCF. The USCF certainly accepts Alabama residents who are not ACF members. We'll accept members from other states. We'll even accept members from other states who are not USCF members! As this issue shows, we are working hard to improve the 'bang for the buck' rating for ACF memberships (mainly the *Antics*). We believe we are making serious progress here and want to share it with the world.

Speaking of the USCF, an extraordinary amount of turmoil is being encountered by our National organization. The U.S. Chess Policy Board newsletter shows a deficit of precisely $227,511 for the three month period ending in September 1996. This is serious stuff. The 1996 - 1997 USCF budget doesn't install confidence in me either. For the coming year, the USCF is budgeting for growth in Regular members, for example. While it makes sense to set goals, budgeting should be firmly entrenched in realism. Regular USCF memberships have been on the decline in recent years. The USCF claims 31,453 members. They note that precisely 24,272 regular members have not renewed in the last 18 months. What has gone wrong? Perhaps the $40 price tag for a regular membership is excessive.

The actual USCF picture is likely much more bleak than mentioned above. Feel free to read the

rec.games.chess.politics

newsgroup on the internet for more information. Frank discussions between most of the current Policy Board members can be found here. In fact, Tom Dorsch (USCF Treasurer) has recently been severely reprimanded for being too forthright. This is detailed by a USCF President's Letter which can be found on the USCF web site at

www.uschess.org.

His crime? Well, he has mainly complained about not having access to the books! That's right, the USCF Treasurer (as I write this) has not seen the financial records of the USCF! This is ridiculous. It appears that some sort of cover-up is in progress. Tom Dorsch is fighting city hall, but sometimes city hall needs to be fought! This is especially true in a politicized, national, not-for-profit organization. Go get 'em Tom!

Don't expect to read about the USCF problems in *Chess Life*. (See, yet another reason why you **need** an ACF membership...) Don't worry, bad people can't take away the game which we love. They can only administrate it poorly! From where I'm sitting, chess looks mighty good in Alabama. See you at the Queen of Hearts. God bless us all!

(The opinions in the last few paragraphs are President Melvin's. At present the ACF Executive Board does not have an editorial position regarding the situation at USCF - Ed.)

Dec. '96 ACF Executive Board Meeting Highlights

by Bill Melvin

On Sunday, December 8, a meeting of the ACF Executive Board was held from 8:00 A.M. until 9:30 A.M. at the Magic City Open playing site. Attendance was outstanding for such a meeting (12 - 15 people) and many issues were discussed. Most of the discussion involved ACF Memberships which was the focal point of the meeting. Approximately 50 of the 90 minutes involved discussion of membership issues.

Highlights:

1 ACF Treasurer position was abolished and combined with the Secretary position. Jack Mallory is now the ACF Secretary/Treasurer. This should permanently clear up any confusion on where to send ACF memberships. Send your money to Jack today and have a membership tomorrow! The next *Antics* is due out in the late January time frame, so please renew now.

2 ACF Editor position is now an elected position (formerly appointed by the President) and now receives a vote as one of the five ACF Officers. So, Rhodes Peele will no longer be saddled with Treasurer responsibilities and will be free to concentrate on the *Antics*. He will also retain voting privileges which seems appropriate for the hardest working ACF Officer.

3 Through a series of votes it was decided to send the next issue of the *Antics* (and the next issue ONLY) to all former ACF members whose membership expired during 1996. Included in the issue will be information explaining the label and notification that the issue constitutes a renewal notice for some.

4 The executive Board acknowledged that many members have not received their copy of the *Antics* yet. For most, this can be attributed to either a) their membership lapsed, or b) slowness of bulk mail. It also appears that many who renewed in the time frame of the State Championship have not received an issue. Our database is thought to be correct in this regard and will be double-checked. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who renewed at the State Championship as to whether or not they received an *Antics*. Please contact me as I have a few spare copies I'll gladly provide. These copies were made available during the Magic City Open as well.

6 Several issues were discussed and ultimately voted down (or not put to a vote.) The results of these discussions were:

a ACF memberships shall be good for one year from date of purchase and the ACF shall not move towards a common expiration date.

b Expiring members shall receive no additional notification when their memberships expire (expiration date on *Antics* label was deemed sufficient). A blurb will appear in each *Antics* explaining the expiration date on the label (I didn't know it was there!).

That's a reasonable summary of the meeting. Please note that these are merely highlights and not meant to discuss everything which occurred (it was a busy meeting). The next ACF Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Sunday morning during the Queen of Hearts tournament in Montgomery. The agenda is still being developed for this meeting, but it will include discussions about whether or not the ACF can afford to continue the $4 scholastic membership category.

If you'd like an ACF membership (and four GREAT issues of the *Antics*) then here is all you've got to do:

1 Pick out the type of membership you would like to have from the following list (note that Affiliate Memberships are for chess clubs):

Regular individual membership: $10 / year
Junior Individual Membership (age 19 and under) $5 / year
Scholastic membership (an individual registered in an Alabama K - 12 school): $4 /year
Affiliate membership: $15 / year

2 Send your name, address, phone number, USCF ID number, date of birth, and a check for the appropriate amount to:

Jack Mallory

3 Sit back and enjoy the *Antics*. Win the Alabama Heart of Dixie Tour. Write an article. Watch your rating go up 300 points (not guaranteed)! Have fun!

Bill Melvin

ACF President

By-Law Changes
by Jack Mallory

A Board of Directors Meeting was held in Birmingham on 8 December 1996. The Executive Officers and the Board Members attending voted unanimously to combine the offices of Secretary and Treasurer and to elevate the position of Editor of *Alabama Chess Antics* to an Executive Office. Consequently, Jack C. Mallory is now Secretary/Treasurer and Dr. Rhodes Peele is Editor. We hope this arrangement will increase efficiency and give Dr. Peele more time to continue his outstanding work as Editor. The affected Sections of the By-Laws of ACF now read:

IV.1. Membership. The Executive Board shall consist of the Directors and the Executive Officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, Scholastic Vice President, and Editor. An Executive Officer must be a member of ACF and a resident of the State of Alabama. If required by the Executive Board, any officer shall give the ACF a bond for the faithful performance of their duties in such amount and surety as shall be satisfactory to the Executive Board.

V.1. Number and Qualification. The officers of the ACF shall be Executive Officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, Scholastic Vice-President, and Editor. The President or the Executive Board may appoint additional officers, such as members of the Nominations Committee, as it may determine. An Appointed Officer may, but need not be, an Executive Board member, but must be a member of ACF and may hold more than one office at the same time. An Appointed Officer shall not have a vote at Executive Board meetings unless he/she is also an elected member of the Executive Board.

V.5. Secretary/Treasurer. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer

(continued next page)

ACF Officers

Bill Melvin, President

Lamar Daniel, Vice-President

Sam Whatley, Scholastic Vice-President

Jack C. Mallory, Secretary/Treasurer

Rhodes Peele, Editor

Kenneth Sloan, USCF Delegate

USCF Voting Members for Alabama
Bill Melvin
Rhodes Peele
Walter Schaetzle

the chief accounting officer of the ACF. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be in charge of the ACF's financial affairs, funds, securities and valuable papers and shall keep full and accurate records thereof. The Secretary/Treasurer may have other powers and duties as designated by the Executive Board or the President. The Secretary/Treasurer shall also be in charge of the ACF's books of accounts and accounting records, and of its accounting procedures. The Secretary/Treasurer shall report at the membership and Executive Board meetings on the financial condition of the ACF. The Secretary/Treasurer shall record and maintain records of all proceedings of the members and Executive Board in a book or series of books kept for that purpose, which book or books shall be kept within the State of Alabama at the office of the Secretary/Treasurer or at the principal office of the ACF or its resident agent and shall be open at all reasonable times for inspection by any member. Such book or books shall also contain records of all meetings of incorporation, and the original or attested copies of the Articles of Organization and the names of all executive Board members and appointed officers and the addresses of each. If the Secretary/Treasurer is absent from any meeting of members or directors, a temporary secretary chosen at the meeting shall exercise the duties of the Secretary at that meeting.

V.7. Editor. The Editor shall be responsible for the printing, publication, and distribution of the official quarterly publication of ACF, *Alabama Chess Antics*. The Editor shall determine the format, layout and content of the *Antics* and shall solicit articles and and tournament announcements from the affiliates and members, or other sources he/she deems appropriate. The Editor may appoint assistants, as he/she deems appropriate, to handle printing, mailing, proofreading, or other duties associated with publication of the *Antics*. The President shall tell the Editor the number of copies of each issue to be printed.

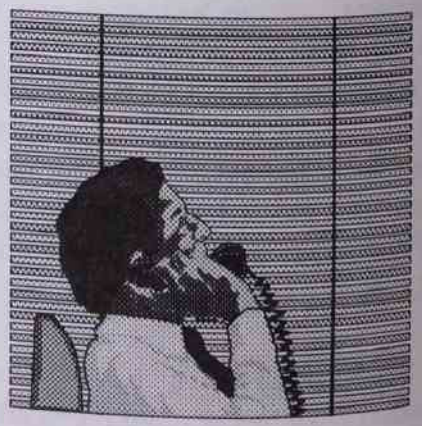
Maintaining the ACF Membership Roster ...

by Caesar Lawrence, Jack Mallory, Bill Melvin, Rhodes Peele and Dick Rhea

Dear Gentle Reader - If you read nothing else in this issue, please take careful note of the following so that the ACF can maintain, update and when necessary correct its membership roster ! - Ed.

Look at the mailing label on this issue of *Alabama Chess Antics*. The first line contains (in this order) (i) your membership type (REG = Regular, JUN = Junior, SCH = Scholastic, LIF = Life, AFFL = Affiliate); (ii) your ACF (*not* USCF) expiration date; (iii) your ACF membership number, which *should* be identical with your USCF number; (iv) a number that Dick Rhea has used in the past to code deposits into the ACF checking account.

It is **up to you to renew your membership** before or when it expires and to **bring problems to the Secretary/Treasurer's attention** if you or someone you know isn't getting the *Antics*. Delivery dates of the same issue to different members may vary by as much as ten days due to the nature of bulk mail delivery. If more time than this passes and you or your friend still haven't received your/their issue, please contact **Jack Mallory**, the **ACF Secretary/Treasurer**. His mailing address and phone number appear on the previous page.



CHESS FOUNDATION OF ALABAMA

Chess Foundation of Alabama

Dear Chessplayer:

A few years ago, a charitable organization was formed to promote chess and chess education for the residents of the state of Alabama. That organization is the Chess Foundation of Alabama.

The Foundation is having to raise funds. All funds raised will be accumulated and invested. Income from those funds will be used for the Foundation's charitable activities, i.e., help promote scholastic chess programs, both existing and undeveloped; chess camp scholarships; continued publication of the Alabama Chess Federation quarterly newsletter, Alabama Chess Antics, and other chess-promoting endeavors consistent with the Foundation's status as a tax-exempt organization. We solicit your participation in support of the Foundation's efforts to expose even more of our state's citizens, both young and old, to the challenge and stimulation of this time-honored game of strategy, tactics, concentration and patience.

Please join us now in this endeavor. We offer three categories of sponsorship: Under $10, Donor; $11-$25, Sponsor; $26 and Over, Benefactor. We will be happy to mail you a copy of the Foundation's By-Laws and/or Articles of Incorporation upon receipt of your request and a $30 or more contribution. All contributions are **tax deductible**, and a receipt will be supplied at your request.

Checks should be made payable to the **Chess Foundation of Alabama.** Should you prefer to make a pledge, please do so by telephone or fax to the numbers indicated above.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE - SUPPORT CHESS IN ALABAMA !!!

Sincerely,

Richard W. Ellis
President

Chess for Life

ACF Calendar *by Kenneth Sloan*

This table of chess events is taken from the webpage
*Look it over and mark your calendar with all events that you **might** want to play in! Organizers, please call or E-mail Dr. Sloan so that your tournament(s) can be listed. - Ed.*

Event	Date and City	Contact person, phone number and/or E-mail address
First Sunday Quads	February 2, Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan
Hoover Scholastic	February 8, Hoover	Vasha Rosenblum
Queen of Hearts	February 15-16, Montgomery	Rhodes Peele
Middle Tennessee Open	March 1, Nashville, TN	Mark Ishee
First Sunday Quads	March 2, Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan
State Scholastic Individual Championship	March 15, Tuscaloosa	Walter Schaetzle
Maxwell/Gunter/Montgomery Quick Chess Game/29	March 15, Montgomery (Gunter AFB)	Caesar Lawrence
Smokey Mountains Chess Festival	March 15, Gatlinburg TN	Mark Ishee
First Sunday Quads	April 6, Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan
Alabama State Scholastic Team Championships	April 12, Hoover	Vasha Rosenblum
Maxwell/Gunter/Montgomery Quick Chess Game/29	April 19, Montgomery (Gunter AFB)	Caesar Lawrence
Space City Open	April 19-20, Huntsville	Jerry Wheeler
SuperNationals Scholastic	April 25-27, Knoxville, TN	Karen Massey
First Sunday Quads	May 4, Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan
Alabama (QC) G/29 Championship	May 10, Montgomery (Gunter AFB)	Caesar Lawrence
First Sunday Quads	June 1, Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan
Birmingham City Qualifier	June 29, Birmingham	Kyle Therrell;

1996/7 "Heart of Dixie" Chess Tour

The Alabama **"Heart of Dixie"** Chess Tour is a year-long contest to help promote Alabama chess participation and competition. The inaugural "Heart of Dixie" tour will span from October 1, 1996 through the 1997 Alabama State Championship. For a tournament to qualify as an Alabama Heart of Dixie Tour event, it must meet the following requirements:

- It must be **USCF rated.**
- It must **require ACF dues** for Alabama residents. No other dues may be required except USCF dues.
- It must be an **open weekend tournament in Alabama of at least three rounds** in length.
- It must be **advertised on the ACF WWW Calendar** as an Alabama Heart of Dixie event at least one month in advance.
- A copy of the final **wall chart** and appropriate Heart of Dixie Tour **fees** must be **submitted** to the ACF Secretary / Treasurer within two weeks of the end of the tournament.

Prize Fund

The prize fund will be formed from tournament round fees (USCF Grand Prix events, $5.00 per round; all others, $3.00 per round; Quick rated events, $2.00 per round) and other donations. The ACF is donating $300.00 to the prize fund for the Dixie Tour's inaugural year. Prizes will be awarded to top players of each class by the following percentages of the prize fund:

Master/Expert:	1st, 10%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class A:	1st, 10%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class B:	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class C:	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class D:	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class E/Unrated	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%

Conditions of Awarding Prizes

- The final class standing of a player will be determined by the August 1997 USCF rating supplement.
- Players must be ACF members to accumulate Heart of Dixie points.

Earning Heart of Dixie Points

ACF members may earn Heart of Dixie points as follows:

Each player participating in an Alabama USCF Grand Prix Heart of Dixie Tour event will earn 20 points. Players participating in the Alabama State Championship will earn 30 points. Players participating in all other Heart of Dixie Tour events will earn 10 points. Players must complete at least half of the scheduled rounds in any tournament to earn these points.

Players will be awarded additional Heart of Dixie points for a positive performance result in any Heart of Dixie event by the formula

(wins - losses) x (# of rounds) = performance pts

A maximum of 20 performance points will be awarded for any one-day event. Players must complete the tournament to earn any performance points. Unplayed games except for byes or forfeit wins will be counted as losses for this calculation. Full-point byes will be counted as wins.

Current Heart of Dixie Standings

by Jack Mallory

26 December 1996, Magic City Open rated, total prize fund $325.

Player	Points
Master/Expert	
Andy Reeder (2039)	35
Andrew Whatley (2235)	30
Bill Melvin (2267)	25
Kirk Petty (2039)	25
Class A	
Kenneth Sloan (1846)	25
Jack Gwin (1814)	20
Caesar Lawrence (1842)	20
John Morcos (1860)	20
Rhodes Peele (1998)	20
Class B	
Roy Stanton (1797)	40
David Morrison (1602)	20
Class C	
Mohamed Abdel-Ghany (1500)	35
Richard Ellis (1500)	20
Class D	
David Sloan (1314)	25
Robert Rieves (1384)	20
Class E/Unrated	
Warner Chandler (UNR)	20
Sebastian Delorenz (1089)	20
Roy Martin (878)	20

If you think you should be included, check your ACF membership status! Only current ACF members are eligible to earn points. If there is any question, write to Jack C. Mallory

25th Queen of Hearts

February 15 and 16, 1997

at Auburn University **at Montgomery**, 10th floor Library Tower on Saturday; Student Activities Room, University Center on Sunday.

USCF membership required for all players.
ACF membership required for Alabama residents.

Wheelchair accessible. No smoking in tournament room.

Open Section (Open to all.)	
First prize	$250
Second prize	$125
Top expert	$125
Top under 2000	$125
Second under 2000	$75

Amateur Section (Open to under 1800)	
First prize	$140
Second prize	$70
Top under 1600	$100
Second under 1600	$50

Reserve Section (Open to under 1400.)	
First prize	$140
Second prize	$70
Class E prize	$70
Unrated prize	$70

How to enter: Pay the $50 regular entry fee at registration from 8:15 to 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, February 15, **or** save $10 by mailing your $40 preentry by February 5, payable to Montgomery Chess Club - write your USCF ID# on the check, to TD Rich Bellezza

Time controls: 40 moves in 90 minutes, then sudden death in 30 minutes.

Rounds: Saturday, 9:30, 2:30 and 7:30; Sunday, 9:30 and 2:30.

Special Event on Friday evening (February 14): Play chess at the coffee bar at Barnes and Noble Bookstore, 4075 Eastern Boulevard, Montgomery from 7:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M. Bring set and clock. Nonrated speed tournament at 8:00 P.M.

A Heart of Dixie Tour Event! Full prize fund ($1410) based on 40 entries.

First Sunday Quads

When:	The First Sunday of (almost) every month (please check the ACF Calendar)
Where:	Hill University Center on the UAB campus (corner of University Ave and 14th Street South)
What:	Low-cost USCF rated Quads, G/45. **Entry fee: $2.00.** Some sections may be Hex, or G/30
Times:	**Registration,** 1:00-1:30; **Rounds,** 1:45, 3:15, 4:45
Prizes:	Clear winner in each section receives free entry to the next event.

All ages and all playing levels welcome. USCF Membership Required (available on site). This is a popular low-stress format. Come and enjoy the chess! No big $$, no big trophies - just chess. Please bring sets, boards and clocks. Round times are nominal - we'll play each round ASAP (RR format means no delay for pairings). Questions? - contact Kenneth Sloan

Alabama (QC) G/29 Championship

5 Round Swiss USCF Quickchess rated

When:	Saturday, May 10, 1997
Entry fee:	$20 (cash) for each player
Time Control:	Game in 29 minutes
Where:	Recreation Center, Gunter AFB Building 825 (210 Ramp Street) Montgomery, AL
Registration:	8:00 A.M. til 9:00 A.M.
Rounds:	9:15, 10:30, 11:45, 1:45 and 3:00
Prizes:	**$400 based on 20 players** Trophy to top overall and top under 1600 1st place $100; Top Class A $75; Top Class B $75 Top Class C$75; Top under 1400/unrated $75
Questions:	Caesar Lawrence (TD) E-mail:
Notice:	USCF and ACF Membership and ID are required; NS, NC, W

A "Heart of Dixie" Tour Event !

Four Games from the Magic City Open

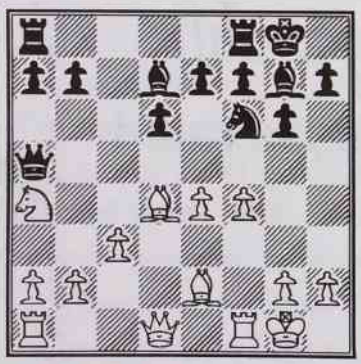
by 'Olden Young'

Here are four interesting games from the Magic City Open!

Magic City Open
December 7, 1996
Round 1, Board 1; 40/90, SD/30
Sicilian Dragon

John Morcos (1860) **Ross Sprague (2313)**

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 ed 4.Nd4 g6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Be2 O-O 8.O-O d6 9.f4 Qb6 10.Na4 Qa5 11.c3 Nd4 12.Bd4 Bd7



*Position after **10. ...Bd7***

13.Nc5 dc 14.Bf6 Ba4 15.b3 Bf6 16.e5 Bg7 17.ba Qc3 18.Qb3 Qb3 19.ab f6 20.Bc4+ Kh8 21.ef Bf6 22.Rad1 Rad8 23.g3 Bd4+ 24.Kg2 a6 25.Rfe1 Rd7 26.Re6 Rfd8 27.Rde1 Bf6 28.R1e2 Kg7 29.Kf3 Rd6 30.g4 Re6 31.Re6 Rd2 32.h3 Kf8 33.g5 Bc3 34.Kg4 Rd4 35.Rb6 Rd7 36.Re6 Ba5 37.Re5 Bb4 38.h4 Rd4 39.Re2 Bd2 40.Rf2 e5 41.Resigns. 0 - 1

Magic City Open
December 8, 1996
Round 4, Board ?; 40/90,SD/30
Dutch Defense

Andy Reeder (2039) **Andrew Whatley (2247)**

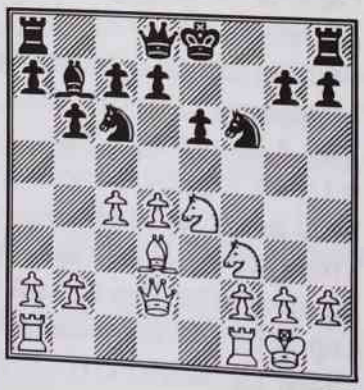
1.d4 f5 2.c4 e6

Probably more common is 2. ...Nf6, not committing so quickly to play ...e6.

3.Nc3 b6

3. ...Nf6 is definitely better now, instead of 3. ...b6, which just lets White play 4.e4 without any trouble at all.

4.e4 fe 5.Ne4 Nf6 6.Bd3 Nc6 7.Nf3 Bb4+ 8.Bd2 Bb7 9. O-O Bd2 10.Qd2



*Position after **10.Qd2***

The tactical shot 10. ...Nd4 doesn't quite work because of 11.Nf6+ Qf6 and 12.Nd4, when 12. ...Qd4 is met by 13.Bg6+, winning the Black queen.

10. ...Qe7 11.Rfe1

My pieces begin to take advantage of the poorly placed Black queen.

11. ...O-O 12.d5 ed

Better would have been 12. ...Nd8, trying to avoid discovered attacks on the queen.

13.cd Nd8

If 13. ...Nb4, then 14.d6; 13. ...Nd5 14.Bc4 Ncb4 15.a3, and 13... Nd8, as in the game, is met by 14.d6. So, the only move is 13. ...Ne5. Then after 14.Nf6+ gf, Black is only slightly worse, instead of lost, as in the game.

14.d6 Qf7

14. ...cd is met by 15.Nd6, when if 15. ...Qd6, then 16.Bh7+.

15.dc Ne6 16.Nd6 Qh5 17.Nb7 Ng4

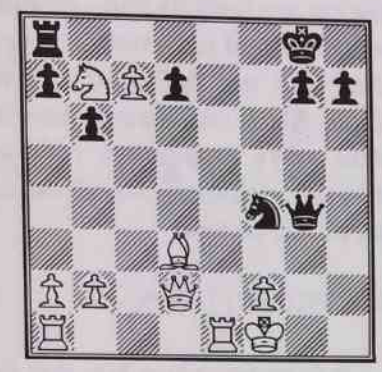
Can Black really get a counterattack going here, a clear piece down? Just you wait and see!

18.h3 Rf3 19.gf

I have absolutely no idea why I played this terrible move! I guess

I just got a little greedy. After 19. hg Qg4 20.Be2 the game is over, but then, if I'd done that the game wouldn't be so exciting!

19. ...Qh3 20.fg Qg4+ 21.Kf1 Nf4



Position after 21. ...Nf4

A number of moves are good here, including : 22.Re3, and if 22. ...Qg2+ 23.Ke1 Qh1+ 24.Bf1 Ng2+ 25.Ke2 Ne3 (25. ...Nf4+ 26.Kd1 Qf1+ 27.Re1) 26.Qe3 Qb7, then 27.Rc1, and White should win easily. Also, there is 22.Re4, when 22. ...Qg2+ 23.Ke1 Qh1+ 24.Bf1 Qe4+ is met by 25.Qe3, and again White should win easily.

22.Re7 Rf8 23.Be4

Preventing any annoyance by means of 23. ...Qg2+ 24.Ke1 Qg1+ 25.Bf1 Ng2+

23. ...Qh3+ 24.Ke1 Qg4 25.Qe3

I played 25.Qe3 with the idea that if 25. ...Qg1+ 26.Kd2 Qa1 27.Qc3, Black will have a hard time defending both the mate on g7 and the queening of the c7 pawn. For example, 27. ...Qg1 28.Rg7+ Qg7 29.c8(Q) Rc8 30.Qc8+ with an easy win for White.

25. ...Nh3 26.Kd2

Of course, if 26. ...Rf2+, then 27.Qf2 Nf2 28.c8(Q) is checkmate.

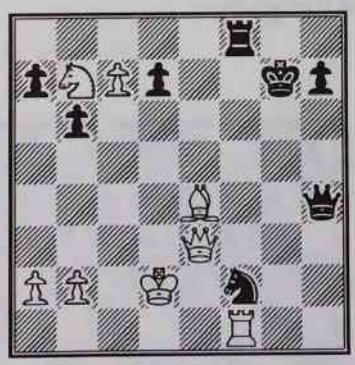
26. ...Nf2 27.Rf1 Qh4

At this point we both had just a minute or two left, so the rest of the game is pretty sloppy on both sides.

28.Rg7+

Even though I believe this move wins, I probably shouldn't have played it because I didn't have enough time to calculate all of the sequences of moves, as I demonstrate with my next few moves. Much easier would have been 28.Bd5+ Kh8 29.Re8.

28. ...Kg7



Position after 28. ...Kg7

29.Qd4+

This move is definitely a mistake, 29.Rg1+ wins immediately:

- If 29. ...Ng4, then 30.Qd4+ Kh6 (30. ...Kg8 or Kf7 31.Bd5+) 31.Rh1 Nh2 32.Qd6+ wins for White.
- If 29. ...Kh8, then 30.Qd4+, and whichever piece Black blocks with, the c7 pawn will queen with check.
- If 29. ...Kf7, then 30.Nd8+ and if 30. ...Rd8 31.cd8(Q) Qd8 32.Qf2+ winning for White, and if instead of 30. ...Rd8, the king moves, then the c7 pawn will queen the following move.
- If 29. ...Kf6, the 30.Qd4+ Ke7 (30. ...Kf7 or Ke6 lose the queen to 31.Bd5+) 31.Qd6+ Kf7 (31. ...Ke8 loses to 32.c8(Q) with mate to follow) 32.Bd5+ Kd8 33.c8(Q) with mate next move.

29. ...Kh6 30.Qd6+

This move definitely gives White some problems. After 30. ...Rf6, the only thing I can do is 31.Qf6+ Qf6 32.c8(Q), which should lead to a perpetual check after 32. ...Ne4+ 33.Ke1Qh4+ 34.Kd1 Qg4+ 35.Kc1 Qg5+ ... . Instead of 30. Qd6+, I should have played 30.Qe3+, which would probably transpose to the 29.Rg1+ lines (if I play Rg1+ after 30.Qe3).

30. ...Rf6 31.c8(Q)

This move (along with the last two) could have blown the whole game! If he had played 31. ...Ne4+, I'm probably lost after a king move and 32. ...Nd6, but in he was in time pressure too, and luckily for me, he didn't see it either!

(concluded next page)

31. ...Rd6+ 32.Nd6 Qf4+ 33.Ke2 Qd6 34.Rf2 Qe5 35.Qf8+ Qg7 36.Rh2+ Kg5 37.Qg7+ Kf4 38.Rh4 checkmate.

1 - 0

- Annotated by Andy Reeder -

Magic City Open
December 7, 1996
Round 3, Board 3, 40/90, SD/30
Caro Kann; Advance Variation

Bill Melvin (2267) **Caesar Lawrence (1842)**

Yes, I know my rating is below 2300 now and I just wrote an article titled "Road to 2300' for the *Antics*. So sue me! I peaked at 2338 on the latest run before pitching 100 rating points (so far). *(Tell me about it! - Ed., 1 - 4, Magic City Open)* Discouraged? Nope! I find games like this one make it all worthwhile.

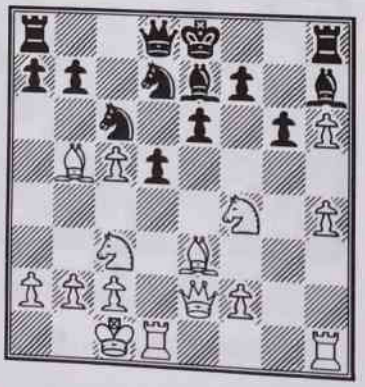
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3 e6 5.g4 Bg6 6.Nge2 h6 7.h4 c5 8.Be3! Nbd7 9.Nf4 Bh7 10.dc Ne5 11.Bb5+ Nc6 12.Qe2

I hope that I'm not showing off too much, but this is actually the end of my opening preparation. My note in Bookup says that White is better/winning/whatever. I am currently putting my entire repertoire into Bookup and recently completed the Caro Kann. Of course, remembering the analysis is the hard part. I'm still working on a theory as to why I seem to be more likely to forget my preparation against highly rated opposition. I suppose this is part of the learning curve.

The fact that I have this position in my repertoire tells a lot about my style. White is willing to accept some serious pawn defects in return for active play. Knight sacrifices on d5 and e6 are everywhere in these positions. by the way, giving 8.Be3 an '!' is in preference to the 'obvious' move 8.h5. As it turns out, 8.h5 is too committal. Notice how I played 9.Nf4 'with tempo' since Black cannot allow the bishop to be exchanged on g6. Subtleties like this are all over the theory of the Advanced Caro Kann.

Even though I am still sort of 'in book', I've used about 15 minutes to get to this point. I wasn't 100 percent sure that this was the exact position where Qe2 is strong until I returned home and looked up the variation.

12. ...Nf6 13.O-O-O Be7 14.g5 Nd7 15.gh! g6!



Position after 15. ...g6!

This last pair of moves gives a good indication of just how powerful White's position has become. Notice that 15. ...gh would be met brutally by 16.Ne6.

Good things about Black's position are hard to find. Nonetheless, if allowed to move his king to safety and get the center pawns rolling, Black could easily become better. My next move is based more on positional considerations than purely tactical.

16.Nfd5!! ed 17.Rd5!

It is an unwritten law that the winner of a game may attach as many '!' symbols to the moves as desired. Of course, all of these moves are kind of fantastic. I rejected the natural 17.Nd5 because of 17. ...O-O and I was unable to calculate anything. Of course, its not like I foresaw the game continuation! After the text, 17. ...O-O would be met by 18.Rhd1 and White regains the piece with interest.

17. ...a6 18.Ba4 Qc7 19.Bg5 f6 20.Rhe1

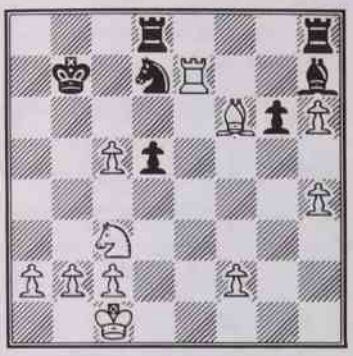
If a resource is found for Black (and I doubt this will happen), then White's best chance to improve is probably on move 19 or 20. Notice that I haven't given any of Black's moves '?' symbols! I really think he was lost by move twelve. Then again, objectivity isn't my strong suit!

20. ...O-O-O 21.Bc6 bc 22.Qa6+

(concluded next page)

It appears that 22.Qe7 works as well. It is curious that White can afford to trade queens down a piece with two more hanging.

22. ...Qb7 23.Qb7+ Kb7 24.Re7 cd 25.Bf6



*Position after **25.Bf6***

Material is a rook for five pawns, but Black can resign already! His knight is pinned, both rooks are tied down, and the bishop has loathed life in general after being subjected to 15. ...g6. White wins material by force.

25. ... Rhf8 26.Bg5 Rh8 27.Rg7 Kc8 28.Bd8 Kd8 29.c6! Nf6 30.c7+ Kc8 31.Nb5 Nd7

I had hoped for the pretty 31. ...Ne4 32.Na7+ Kb7 33.c8(Q)+ Kb6 34.Qc6+ Ka5 35.Qb5++.

32.Nd6+ Kc7 33.Nf7 Ra8 34.Ne5 Kd6 35.Nd7 Bg8 36.Nf6 Be6 37.h7 Ke5 38.Rg8 Ra2 39.h8(Q) Bg8 40.Ng8+ Ke4 41.Kb1 resigns

1 - 0

Annotated by Bill Melvin

Magic City Open
December 8, 1996
Round 4, Board 3; 40/90, SD/30
English Opening

Ken Sloan	**Bill Melvin**
(1846)	**(2267)**

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e5 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.g3 g6 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.O-O O-O 7.Rb1

My opponent has just found a huge hole in my opening repertoire. I am clueless about this position. I have not entered my Black systems into Bookup and need better English understanding anyways. Usually, I prefer having a knight on e7 instead of f6 in this kind of position. I am unable to find this position in *Batsford Chess Openings 2*. It appears that Black usually plays 4. ... d5 instead of my continuation. The exact reason is beyond me, but I have a funny feeling that an exact reason exists. From my limited understanding, 7.Rb1 doesn't look overwhelming although the move has its points.

7. ... d5 8.cd Nd5 9.d3 Nc3!? 10.bc e4 11.Nd4!

My gut tells me that White is better and that 9. ...Nc3 was just plain bad.

11. ... Nd4 12.cd Bd4 13.Bh6?

This move gets White into all sorts of trouble. This bishop becomes a problem and the Black rook is actually more useful on the e file. I was worried about 13.e3 Bg7 14.d4 and White is probably better with pressure down the b and c files.

13. ...Re8 14.Be4 Bh3 15.Re1

The situation is becoming critical. The modest 15.Bg2 is undoubtedly best.

15. ...Qf6 16.e3?

White had to try 16.Be3 to have any chance.

16. ... Bc3 17.Bb7 Be1 18.Qe1 g5

Also worth considering is 18. ...Rab8 19.f4 where 19. ... Rb7 20.Rb7 Qc6 fails to 21.Rb2 and 20. ...Re3 runs into the catastrophic 21.Rb8+. Maybe my move is simpler.

19.Bg5 Qg5 20.Ba8 Ra8 21.f4 Qd5 22.Qe2 Re8 23.e4 Qd4+ 24.Kh1 Rd8 25.Rd1 Rb8

Black has pressed home the advantage relentlessly. The finish is clean and crisp.

26.Qh5 Qf2! 27.Qh3

Alternatives are no better. On 27.Rg1 Bg2+ 28.Rg2 Rb1+ 29.Rg1 Qg1++. Or 27.Qg5+ Kf8 28.Qh6+ Ke8 29.Qc6+ Kd8 30.Qf6+ Kc8 31.Qh8+ Kd7 and Black wins.

27. ... Qf3+ resigns.

0 - 1

Annotated by Bill Melvin

Magic City Open - December 7-8, 1996 - Open Section										
Player	Name	Prev	Perf	Post	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total
1	Ross Sprague	2313	2345	2323	W 9	W 5	D 3	W 6	W 2	4.5
2	Andy Reeder	2039	2368	2103	W 8	W 4	W13	W 3	L 1	4.0
3	Andrew Whatley	2247	2253	2250	W 7	W13	D 1	L 2	W 4	3.5
4	Bill Melvin	2267	2051	2241	W11	L 2	W10	W 7	L 3	3.0
5	Kirk Petty	2000	2087	2012	W10	L 1	.5 bye	W 8	D 6	3.0
6	Charles "Ray" Downs	1977	2044	1987	W14	W 9	.5 bye	L 1	D 5	3.0
7	Kenneth Sloan	1846	2070	1884	L 3	W12	W11	L 4	W10	3.0
8	Jack Gwin	1814	1899	1831	L 2	D11	W 9	L 5	W12	2.5
9	John Morcos	1860	1861	1856	L 1	L 6	L 8	W14	W13	2.0
10	Caesar Lawrence	1842	1863	1843	L 5	W14	L 4	W13	L 7	2.0
11	Alan Todd	1883	1689	1841	L 4	D 8	L 7	D12	D14	1.5
12	John Perciballi	1713	1669	1704	L13	L 7	W14	D11	L 8	1.5
13	Rhodes Peele	1998	1700	1938	W12	L 3	L 2	L10	L 9	1.0
14	Wm. David Morrison	1604	1535	1587	L 6	L10	L12	L 9	D11	0.5
Magic City Open - December 7-8, 1996 - Reserve Section										
1	Roy Stanton	1797	1774	1803	W 6	W12	W 2	W 8	D 4	4.5
2	Bose Agnew	1628	1634	1638	W14	W 3	L 1	W12	W 8	4.0
3	Roger Kernodle	1095	1624	1189	W 7	L 2	W 13	W 5	W 9	4.0
4	Mohamed Abdel-Ghany	1500	1452	1503	L 9	W 15	W 7	W10	D 1	3.5
5	Dave Goyean	1487	1248	1448	L10	W16	W 6	L 3	W12	3.0
6	David Sloan	1314	1371	1324	L 1	W17	L 5	W16	W14	3.0
7	Richard Ellis	1500	1234	1463	L 3	W14	L 4	W13	.5 bye	2.5
8	Scott Alan Miller	1497	1360	1476	W13	D 9	W10	L 1	L 2	2.5
9	Rily E. Lane	1217	1362	1245	W 4	D 8	L 12	W11	L 3	2.5
10	Roy Martin	1067	1467	1118	W 5	W11	L 8	L 4	.5 bye	2.5
11	Robert Rieves	1384	0971	1336	W16	L10	.5 bye	L 9	.5 bye	2.0
12	Vince Higgenbotham	1330	1342	1333	W17	L 1	W 9	L 2	L 5	2.0
13	Sebastian Delorenz	1089	1046	1075	L 8	bye	L 3	L 7	W 17	2.0
14	Jonathan Wright	1283	1144	1250	L 2	L 7	W 15	.5 bye	L 6	1.5
15	Thomas H. Young	0878	0880	0878	bye	L 4	L14	L17	D16	1.5
16	Warren Chandler	UNR	1029	1029	L 11	L 5	W17	L 6	D 15	1.5
17	John Sentilles	UNR	0893	0893	L12	L 6	L16	W15	L13	1.0

Road to a 2300 Rating (Part II) *by Bill Melvin*

We now fast-forward to 1996. I had broken the 2250 barrier a couple of times in 1995. My rating had soared as high as 2280. It would then systematically drop down again before I could rise above my goal.

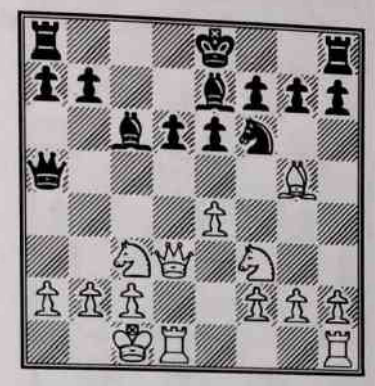
Coming into this Atlanta tournament my rating was slightly above 2250. I was hoping for a good result to get within striking distance of my 2300 goal. I got more than I bargained for! Not only did I win the tournament and achieve a 2300 rating, but I also turned in my first ever 5 - 0 result in a two-day weekend tournament!

Here is a move-by-move account of one tournament I never want to forget. Note that I'm worse or losing in about half of the games. It may surprise you to find that this is actually normal for me in a tournament! Strong players often win due to perseverance and determination. **Never give up!**

Atlanta Southern Congress
April 6, 1996
Round 1, Board 2, Game/70
Sicilian Defense (B53)

Darren Bolden (2014)	Bill Melvin (2252)

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cd 4. Qd4 Nc6 5. Bb5 Bd7 6. Bc6 Bc6 7. Nc3 Nf6 8. Bg5 e6 9. O-O-O Be7 10. Qd3 Qa5



Position after 10. ...Qa5

Still theory! I wasn't aware of this at the time. ECO gives 11. Kb1 as leading to an unclear position. I'm sure that many ideas in this position are untested.

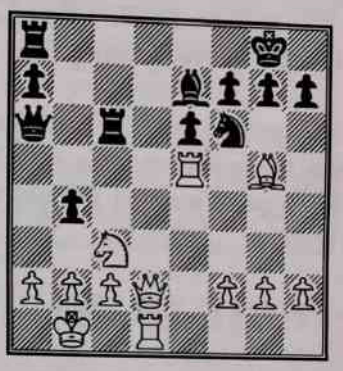
11. Rhe1 O-O 12. Kb1 Rfc8 13. Qd2 Qa6

White was threatening to win with 14. Nd5. My opponent didn't like ...Qa6 at this time but I did. Notice how unassailable the queen is without a White light-squared bishop. Since we are attacking on opposite wings, I wasn't a big fan of his 11.Rhe1.

14. Nd4 b5.

As much as I'd like to stop and ponder the relative values of bishops and knights in this position, I quickly realized the importance of the initiative.

15. Nc6 Rc6 16. e5? de 17.Re5 b4



Position after 17. ...b4

18. Ne4?

This loses by force. My computer found the odd-looking 17. Nb5 which almost seems to hold.

18. ...Ne4 19. Re4 Rd6!

The overloaded queen cannot possibly defend the rook on d1 and the bishop on g5 at the same time.

20. Qd6 Bd6 21. Red4 Bf8 22. b3 h6 23. resigns.

0 - 1

Atlanta Southern Congress
April 6, 1996
Round 2, Board 3, 35/90, SD/60
Three Knights Game (C46)

Bill Melvin (2252)	Daniel Thomas (2027)

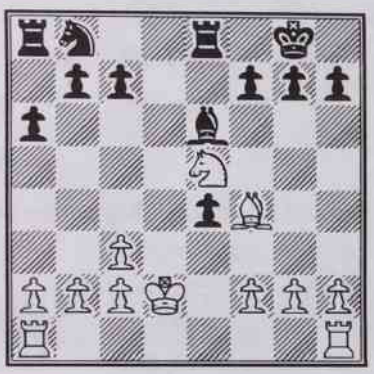
1. e4 e5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. Nf3 Bb4 4. Bc4 O-O 5. Ne5?! Bc3 6. dc Qe7 7. Nf3

Reread "Bad Positional Moves that Win on the Spot" if you missed 7. Qd4 ?? c5!

7. ... Qe4+ 8. Qe2 Qe2+ 9. Ke2 d5! 10. Bb5 a6 11. Bd3 Bg4 12. Bf4 Re8 + 13. Kd2 Ne4+

Yes, I realize exactly how bad White's position has been after 5. Ne5. I was doing all I could to survive.

14. Be4 de4 15. Ne5 ? Be6



*Position after **14. ...Be6***

Now you're going to tell me my knight is trapped or something.

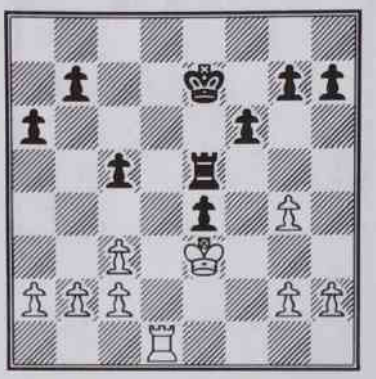
16. f3! f6 17. Ng4 Bg4?

This is a serious mistake. The resulting pawn structure is actually favorable for White. However, 17. ...ef 18. gf Bg4 19. fg is highly favorable to Black. So much for theories about passed pawns being stronger than doubled pawns!

18. fg c5 19. Bb8!

Again, let's not debate the merits of a knight versus a bishop in this position. The weak e4 pawn is going to be the star of the show. Knights are good at confusing the issue.

19. ...Rab8 20. Ke3 Rbd8 21. Rhf1 Kf7 22. Rae1 Re5 23. Rd1 Rd1 24. Rd1 Ke7



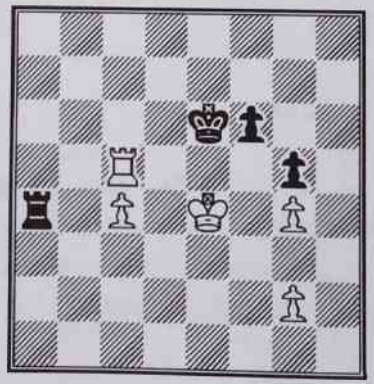
*Position after **24. ...Ke7***

This is my dream ending.

25. Rf1 g5!?

Well, that DID prevent Rf4!

26. Rd1 b6 27. c4 Re6 28. Rd5 Kf7 29. c3 a5 30. b3 Kg6 31. a3 h5 32. h3 hg 33. hg Kf7 34. b4 ab 35. cb Rc6 36. bc bc 37. Ke4 Ke6 38. a4 Ra6 39. Rc5 Ra4



*Position after **39. ...Ra4***

Black is really not that far from holding this.

40. Rc6+ Ke7 41. Kf5 Ra5+ 42. c5 Ra4 43. Re6+ Kd8 44. Rf6 Ra5 45. Rd6+ Kc7 46. Rd5 Kc6 47. Re5 Ra2 48. Kg5 Rg2 49. Kf5 Rf2+ 50. Kg6 Rg2 51. g5 Rg1 52. Kg7 Rg2 53. g6 Rg1 54. Rf5 Kd7 55. Kf7 Re1 56. g7 Re7+ 57. Kg6 Re8 58. Kh7 Re7 59. Kh8 Re8+ 60. Rf8 resigns.

1 - 0

A very close call. Luck most definitely plays a role in chess.

Atlanta Southern Congress
April 6, 1996
Round 3, Board 1, 35/90, SD/30
Ruy Lopez (C64)

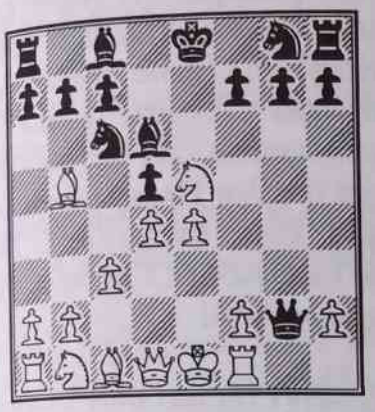
Bill Melvin	**Peter Bereolos**
(2252)	**(2368)**

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. c3 d5 4. Bb5 Bc5.

I classified this as a Ruy Lopez, but at the time the game was played I had never seen this treatment of Ponziani's Opening. Unclear is a good evaluation of this mess.

5. Ne5 Qg5 6. d4 Qg2 7. Rf1 Bd6.

(See top of next page for the position.) Incredibly, this position has been reached many times before. A database survey shows many other options for both sides before now. I've stepped into a very complicated position and 'assumed' I was just winning.



Position after 7. ...Bd6

8. Nc6 Qe4+??

Ouch! That's a real howler. 8. ... Bd7 was required to keep the position unclear.

9. Be3

Now 9. ...Bd7 is met painfully by 10. Bd3 and the knight lives.

9. ...Bg4 10. Ne5 + resigns.

1 - 0

Black is simply a piece down without relevant compensation.

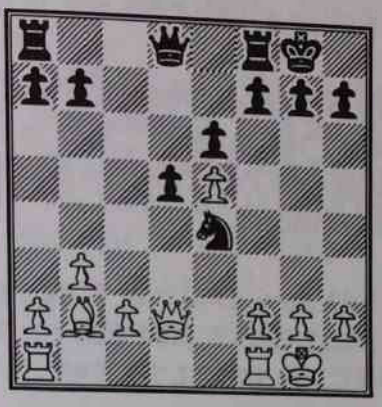
Atlanta Southern Congress
April 7, 1996
Round 4, Board 1, 35/90, SD/60
Queen's Pawn Opening (D00)

Matt Puckett (2270)	**Bill Melvin** (2252)

1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. e3 Bg4 4. Nbd2 e6 5. Be2 c5 6. O-O Nc6

Matt and I have actually played these exact moves several times with mixed results.

7. b3 cd 8. ed Bb4 9. Bb2 O-O 10. Ne5 Be2 11. Qe2 Bd2 12. Qd2 Ne5 13. de Ne4 ?



Position after 13. ...Ne4?

I really misevaluated this position. This knight nearly gets trapped. Better is 13. ...Nd7 where White has the initiative.

14. Qe3 Qc7 15. c4 b6 16. cd ed

White must be close to winning already.

17. Rad1 Rfd8 18. b4 Qe7

Hoping that White thinks I'm going to try 19. f3 Qb4 20. Ba3 and Black can resign. My intentions are different.

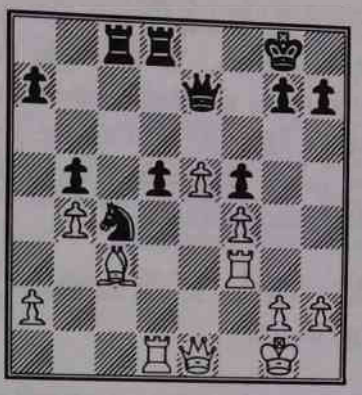
19. f3 Nd6 20. Qe1?!

Matt may be missing his best chances. 20. Rd5 Nc4 21. Rd8+ Rd8 22. Qc3 leaves White up a pawn.

20. ...Nc4 Bc3 b5

Black is dreaming of a good knight vs. bad bishop ending.

22. f4 Rac8 23. Rf3 f5



Position after 23. ... f5

24. e6!?

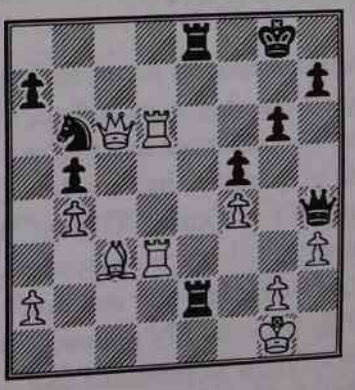
This pawn sacrifice is interesting. I feel that it is unnecessary.

24. ... Rc6 25.Rg3 g6 26. Qf2 d4!

Naturally Black must counter-sacrifice to survive.

27. Rd4 Re6 28. h3 Re8 29. Rgd3 Re2 30. Qf3 Nb6!

Try playing Black's position without this move. You can't! The knight is sitting in the middle of nowhere but controlling all the key squares.



Position after 32. Rd6?

31. Qc6 Qh4 32. Rd6?

This is an exceptionally complicated position. White might consider some defensive move here like 32. Qf3. As it turns out, I see one move further and my attack breaks through first.

32. ... Qf2+ 33. Kh2 Qf4+ 34. Rg3 Rg2+!

Black's only move to stop Rg6+ wins on the spot. White has only one move to avoid mate.

35. Qg2 Qd6 36. Qf2 Nc4 37. Bd4 a6 38. Bc5 Qd1 39. Rg1 Qe2 40. Kg2 Ne3+ 41. Be3 Re3 42. Rc1 Qf2+ 43. Kf2 Rh3 44. resigns

0 - 1

The ending is beyond hopeless.

Atlanta Southern Congress
April 7, 1996
Round 5, Board 1, 35/90, SD/60
Goring Gambit (C44)

Bill Melvin (2252) **Guillermo Ruiz (2294)**

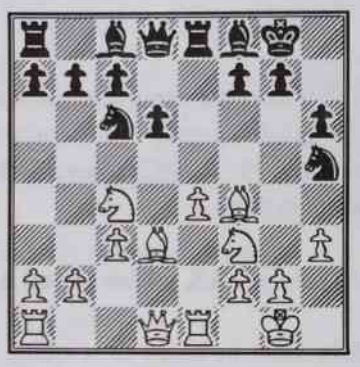
1. e4 Nc6 2. d4 e5

Decision time. I'm not really prepared for this specific line. I've seen 2. ...d5 much more often. My old preparation had me transposing into a Goring Gambit from here. But, I haven't played a Goring Gambit in years and don't entirely trust it. My opponent must be at home in positions like 3. de Ne5 4. f4. What to do? This is a very important game. A win is a 2300 rating, clear first, and my first ever two-day 5 - 0 result. A loss is, well, disappointing.

3. Nf3 ed 4. c3 d3

This is NOT the common way to decline this gambit. Yet, in this article (see Part I) we've seen this occur twice!

5. Bd3 d6 6. O-O Nf6 7. Bg5 Be7 8. Nbd2 O-O 9. Nc4 Re8 10. Re1 h6 11. Bf4 Bf8 12. h3 Nh5



*Position after **12. ...Nh5***

The position is very dynamic and unclear. I kept the dark squared bishop in this game unlike the Tom Friedel game from eight years before.

13. Be3 Qf6 14. Qd2?

You can't take me anywhere! This is my biggest game of the year and I miss a one-mover!

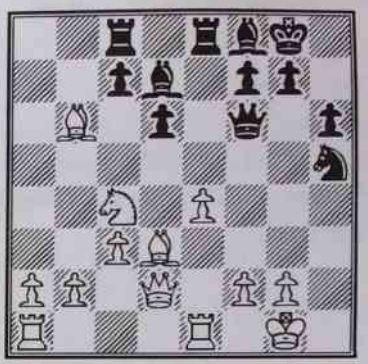
14. ...Bh3 15. Nd4 Bd7?!

I like 15. ...Be6 here. It prevents my following combination.

16. Nb5 Rac8 17. Na7!

Basic principle #1: Never grab rook pawns with knights. Basic principle #2: Ignore all other basic principles if concrete analysis tells you otherwise. The analysis lesson from the Ben Finegold game (see part I) comes into play here. That, and I was REALLY anxious to get my pawn back!

17. ...Na7 18. Ba7 b6?! 19. Bb6!



*Position after **19. Bb6!***

This whole combination took me a while to sort out. After the forcing 19. ...cb6 20. Nb6 Rcd8 21. Nd7 Rd7 22. Bb5 rook moves 23. bishop takes other rook, I had to take off my shoes to do the arithmetic! The combination involves trading all four minor pieces (12 'points') for two minor pieces, a rook, and three pawns (14 'points'). Although the final position would involve a battle of rook and two pawns against two pieces (tough), I felt that this was superior than the pawn down middlegame I was enjoying. Of course I had to see this on move 17 or earlier. My opponent finally sees my combination and freaks out ...

(cont'd next page)

19. ...d5? 20. Bd4 Qh4 21. ed5 Bd6 22. Nd6 cd

Somehow I'm up two pawns with dominating bishops.

23. Re8+ Re8 24. Re1 Re1+ 25. Qe1 Nf4 26. Qe4 Qg4 27. Bc2!!

I didn't realize how good this move was when I played it! Black was threatening ...Qd1+. 27. Bf1 runs into 27 ...Nh3+ and 27. Bb1 allows perpetual check with 27. ...Qd1+. Fortunately, Black is unable to play both ... Bb5 and ... Ne2 at the same time. Black is busted.

27. ...Bb5 28. g3 Ne2+ 29. Kg2 Qg5 30. c4 Nd4 31. Qd4 Bd7 32. Qh4! Qe5 33. Qd8+ Be8 34. Ba4 Qe4+ 35. Kh2 Kh7 36. Qe8 Qc4 37. Bb3 Qd4 38. Bc2+ resigns.

1 - 0

Three upsets in a row of higher rated Masters brings me my goal! On April 7, 1996, I was the happiest man on earth!

So, what's next? My new goal is 2400 of course! How many years do I think it will take? Well, I'll have a 2400 rating when I play 2400 chess. For now, I'm still enjoying the journey!

Space City Open - April 19-20, 1997

UAH Student Center - Huntsville AL

DETAILS:	5 round Swiss, USCF rated. Heart of Dixie and Novag Grand Prix Tournament. 15 Grand Prix Points.
TIME CONTROL:	40 moves in 100 minutes, then 15 moves in 15 minutes. Scholastic - Game in 45 minutes.
REGISTRATION:	For early registration, send entry form to: Huntsville Chess Club / . On site registration is from 8:00 to 9:00 A.M. on April 19.
ROUNDS:	Open and Reserve Sections: 9:30, 2:30, 7:00 Sat; 9:00, 2:00 Sun. Scholastic: 10:30, 1:30, 3:00, 4:30 Saturday only.
MEMBERSHIP:	Both ACF and USCF membership required; available at site.
ENTRY FEE:	Open: $40 by 4/15; $50 at site. Reserve: $30 by 4/15; $40 at site. Scholasti: $10 by 4/15; $15 at site. Make checks payable to Huntsville Chess Club.
PRIZES:	$500 Guaranteed; other prizes based on 30 entries. Open: 1st, $300 G + trophy; 2nd, $200 G + trophy; Expert, $75, $60; Under 2000, $50, $40. Reserve: 1st, $120 + trophy; 2nd, $80; Class C,$55 - $45; Class D/E, $45, $35; Unrated, $30. Scholastic: Three Sections, K-3; 4-6, 7-12. Trophies 1st - 3rd in each section.
HOTEL ROOM:	Make reservations for Tom Bevill Conference Center and Hotel, 550 Sparkman Drive 35816 by calling (205)-721-9428.
INFORMATION:	Jerry Wheeler Bill Melvin

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Advance registration form

NAME: _____ SECTION: _____

USCF ID #: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

Hoover Scholastic Chess Tournament

February 8, 1997 - Hoover, AL

LOCATION: South Shades Crest Elementary School

DIRESTIONS: Exit 10 on I-459 (one exit West of the Galleria). Travel west on 150 toward Bessemer. At the first traffic light after the exit, turn left onto South Shades Crest Road. Cross the expressway, go down the hill and turn right into "Willow Lake Estates". An almost immediate left turn heads you into the SSC parking lot.

DETAILS: 5 round Swiss, USCF rated. Four sections by grade: Open (K-12); Jr High (K-9); Elem (K-6); Pri (K-3). Players are strongly encouraged to play in lowest section for which they are eligible - but may "play up".

TIME CONTROL: Game in 30 minutes.

ROUNDS: 10;00, 11:30, 1:00, 2:30, 4:00

REGISTRATION: Pre-registration strongly encouraged! Preregistrants send entry form and fees to Vasha Rosenblum / or register on site, 8:30 - 9:15. Make all checks payable to South Shades Crest.

ENTRY FEE: $10 if received by Feb 1; $20 on site.

MEMBERSHIP: All participants must by USCF members ($10) and ACF members ($4).

PRIZES: Trophies to top 10 in each section. Trophy to top team in each section (4 highest scores). Trophy to team with most total points (all sections combined).

TEAMS: This is an individual event, with secondary team prizes. Teams may represent a school or club. Pairings will be "team blind".

CONCESSIONS: Breakfast, lunch and snacks. Chess books / equipment.

QUESTIONS: Vasha Rosemblum

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NAME_____ USCF ID # _____ Exp date _____ Rating_____

ADDRESS_____ Section_____ Grade_____

_____ Date of Birth_____

Team/School/Club_____ Coach_____

1996-7 Alabama Scholastic Championships

March 15, 1997 - Tuscaloosa, AL

LOCATION: Holy Spirit School, 711 37th Street East, Tuscaloosa AL 35405. (Turn north off I 20 and I 59 onto McFarland Boulevard. Turn left at traffic light onto 37th Street. Holy Spirit Church and School are on left side of first block.)

DETAILS: 5 round Swiss restricted to Alabama K - 12 students (K includes pre-school students). No smoking, wheelchair access. Four sections: Open, K-12 (winner declared eligible for Denker National High School Championship); Reserve, K-9; Elementary, K-6; Primary, K-3

TIME LIMIT: Game in 30 minutes. ROUNDS: 9:00, 10:30, 12:00, 1:30, 3:00

ENTRY FEE: $10 if mailed by March 15, $15 at door.

REGISTRATION: Send early entries by March 5 to Walter Schaetzle Include **name, school, USCF #, USCF rating, M/F, grade, birthdate and address** with pre-entry mailing. Or register at site from 7:30 to 8:30 AM prior to first round.

PRIZES: Top five places for each section. Top three players in each grade.

CONCESSIONS: Available as site through 1:00 PM.

Alabama State Scholastic Team Chess Championship

12 April 1997

LOCATION: Trace Crossings Elementary School,
2468 Learning Lane, Hoover, AL 35244

DIRECTIONS: Exit 10 (one exit west of the Galleria) off I-459. Head East on 150 (follow signs for the Hoover Met.). Turn right into Trace Crossings. Turn left at the sign for Trace Crossings School. Turn right into the school grounds.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS: All participants must be USCF ($10) and ACF ($4) members
4 player teams. 5 round Swiss. USCF rated.

FOUR SECTIONS: Open (K-12), Junior High (K-9), Elementary (K-6), Primary (K-3)

TIME CONTROL: Game in 30 minutes.

ROUNDS: 9:00, 10:30, 12:00, 1:30, and 3:00

ENTRY FEE: $40/team.

REGISTRATION: Preregistration must be received by 4:00 PM Thursday, April 10.
On site check-in and registration, 8:00-9:00 AM.
Registration will close promptly at 9:00.
Players registering on site will forfeit the first round!
Make checks payable to South Shades Crest (SSC).
Send entry form and fees to:
Vasha Rosenblum, South Shades Crest School

PRIZES:
Open: State Champion Team and Trophies to top 2 high school teams (K-12)
Junior High: Trophies top 2 teams (7-9)
Elementary: Trophies to top 2 teams (4-6)
Primary: Trophies to top 2 teams (K-3)

CONCESSIONS: Breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Chess books and equipment.

QUESTIONS: Vasha Rosenblum

Teams consist of 4 players (no alternates). Teams with fewer than 4 players are acceptable, but strongly discouraged. All players on a team must attend the same school, administered by a single principal (or equivalent). Alabama schools only. Teams must play in rated order. Sections may be merged depending upon the number of entries.

==========Please fill in COMPLETELY==========

TEAM NAME _____ Section_____ Average Rating_____

SCHOOL _____ Contact_____

1. NAME_____ USCF ID_____ Exp.Date_____ Rating_____
ADDRESS_____ DOB_____ GRADE_____

2. NAME_____ USCF ID_____ Exp. Date_____ Rating_____
ADDRESS_____ DOB_____ GRADE_____

3. NAME_____ USCF ID_____ Exp. Date_____ Rating_____
ADDRESS_____ DOB_____ GRADE_____

4. NAME_____ USCF ID_____ Exp. Date_____ Rating_____
ADDRESS_____ DOB_____ GRADE_____

1996 U.S. Cadet Championship *by Eric Johnson*

This is the text of a USCF press release dated August 27, 1996 by the Assistant Director of the 1996 Cadet Championship - Ed.

Noah Siegel won the 1996 U.S. Cadet Championship, held August 21 - 25, at the U.S. Chess Center in Washington, D.C. Siegel, 14, of New York, N.Y., won the tournament with a 5 - 2 score.

Matthew Puckett, 15, of Meridanville, Al., scored 4 1/2 points to finish in second place. **Mauricio Ruiz**, 16, of N. Providence, R.I., and **Jordy Mont-Reynaud**, 13, of Palo Alto, Ca., tied for third place with 4 points.

The tournament was co-sponsored by local organizer David Mehler, the U.S. Chess Center, and the U.S. Chess Federation.

The U.S. Chess Center it the current home of the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame, a collection of historic chess artifacts and memorabilia open to the general public. The U.S. Chess Center also conducts chess classes and seminars for scholastic players.

For more information on the U.S. Chess Center or the U.S. Hall of Fame, contact David Mehler at the U.S. Chess Center, 1501 M Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20005.

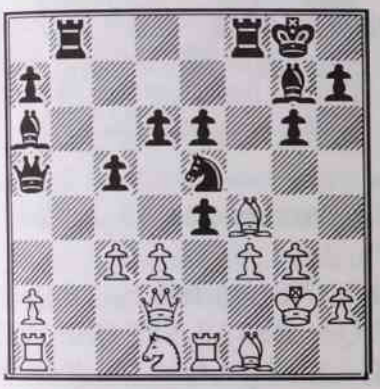
1996 U.S. Cadet Championship Crosstable

#	Name	Age	Rat'g	St.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Tot.
1	Jacob Chudnovsky	15	2364	OH		1	0	.5	.5	0	.5	.5	**3**
2	Harutyun Akopyan	15	2291	CA	0		1	0	0	.5	.5	.5	**2.5**
3	Jordy Mont-Reynaud	13	2265	CA	1	0		0	1	1	1	0	**4**
4	Matthew Puckett	15	2258	AL	.5	1	1		.5	1	.5	0	**4.5**
5	Mauricio Ruiz	16	2223	RI	.5	1	0	.5		1	.5	.5	**4**
6	Justin Sarkar	15	2217	NY	1	.5	0	0	0		1	.5	**3**
7	Nawrose Nur	15	2193	NY	.5	.5	0	.5	.5	0		0	**2**
8	Noah Siegel	13	2192	NY	.5	.5	1	1	.5	.5	1		**5**

Matthew Puckett's '96 U.S. Cadet Games

Round 1 - August 22, 1996
Nawrose Nur Matt Puckett
Sicilian Defense (ECO B23)

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nge2 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 Rb8 6.O-O e6 7.d3 b5 8.Bf4 d6 9.Qd2 Nd4 10.Nd1 b4 11.Be3 Ne7 12.c3 bc 13.bc Ne2+ 14.Qe2 O-O 15.Qd2 Ba6 16.Re1 Nc6 17.f3 Qa5 18.Bf1 Ne5 19.Kg2 f5 20.Bf4 fe



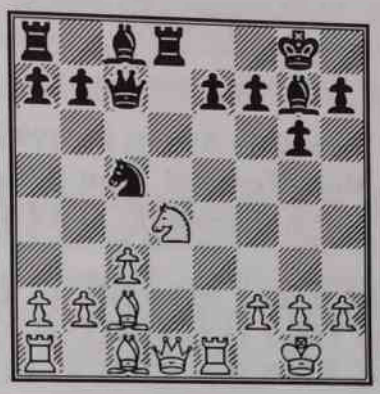
*Position after **20. ...fe***

21.de Nf3 22.Kf3 Bf1 23.Rf1 e5 24.Kg2 ef 25.gf Rb6 26.Rc1 Bh6 27.Rc2 c4 28.Rf3 Rbb8 29.Qd6 Rbd8 30.Qe6+ Kh8 31.Ne3 Bf4 32.Nd5 Bh6 33.Rf8+ Rf8 34.Qe7 Qd8 35.Qd8 Rd8 36.Rf2 Kg7 37.Kf3 Rf8+ 38.Ke2 Rf2+ 39.Kf2 Kf7 40.Ne3 Bg7 41.Nc4 Bc3 draw.

1/2 - 1/2

Round 2 - August 22, 1996
Matt Puckett Noah Siegel
Colle System (ECO D04)

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 g6 4.Bd3 Bg7 5.O-O O-O 6.Nbd2 Nbd7 7.Re1 c5 8.c3 Qc7 9.e4 de 10.Ne4 Ne4 11.Be4 cd 12.Nd4 Nc5 13.Bc2 Rd8



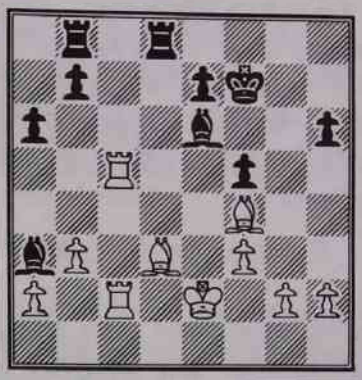
*Position after **13. ... Rd8***

14.Be3 Ne6 15.Ne6 Be6 16.Qf3 Bd5 17.Be4 e6 18.Bd5 Rd5 19.Rac1 b5 20.b3 Rad8 21.c4 bc 22.bc Rd3 23.Red1Qc4 24.Rd3 Qd3 25.Ba7 Qd2 26.Qe3 Qd1+ 27. resigns

0 - 1

Round 3 - August 23, 1996
J. Chudnovsky Matt Puckett
Sicilian Defense (ECO B36)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cd 4.Nd4 g6 5.c4 Nf6 6.Nc3 d6 7.Be2 Nd4 8.Qd4 Bg7 9.Bg5 O-O 10.Qd2 Be6 11.Rc1 Qa5 12.f3 Rfc8 13.b3 h6 14.Be3 a6 15.Na4 Qd2+ 16.Kd2 Nd7 17.Rc2 Rab8 18.Ba7 Ra8 19.Be3 Rab8 20.Rhc1 f5 21.ef gf 22.Nb2 Ne5 23.Nd3 Nd3 24.Bd3 Kf7 25.c5 dc 26.Rc5 Rd8 27.Ke2 Bb2 28.R1c2 Ba3 29.Bf4



*Position after **29.Bf4***

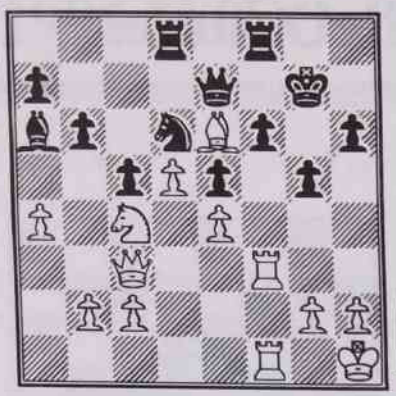
29. ... Rd3 30.Bb8 Rd8 31.Bc7 Rc8 32.R5c3 Bb4 33.Rc4 Bc4+ 34.Rc4 b5 35.Rb4 Rc7 36.Kd3 e5 37.a4 ba 38.ba Rc6 39.Rc4 Rb6 40.Rc5 Ke6 41.a5 Rd6+ 42.Ke3 Kf6 43.g3 Ke6 44.g4 fg 45.fg Kf6 46.h4 Ke6 47.Rc4 Kd5 48.Rb4 Rg6 draw

1/2 - 1/2

Round 4 - August 23, 1996
Matt Puckett Justin Sarkar
Trompowski (ECO C91)

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 Ne4 3.Bf4 c5 4.d5 d6 5.Nd2 Nf6 6.e4 g6 7.Ne2 Bg7 8.Nc3 O-O 9.Be2 Na6 10.O-O Nc7 11.a4 e5 12.Bg5 h6 13.Bh4 Qe8 14.Nc4 Qd7 15.Bg3 Nfe8 16.f4 ef 17.Bf4 Bd4+ 18.Kh1 g5 19.Bg3 f6 20.Qd3 Be5 21.Bh5 Qe7 22.Rf2 b6 23.Raf1 Bd4 24.Rf3 Ba6 25.Bg4 Rd8 26.Ne2 Be5 27.Be5 de 28.Ng3 Nd6 29.Nf5 Nf5 30.Bf5 Ne8 31.Qc3 Nd6 32.Be6+ Kg7

(see diagram next page)



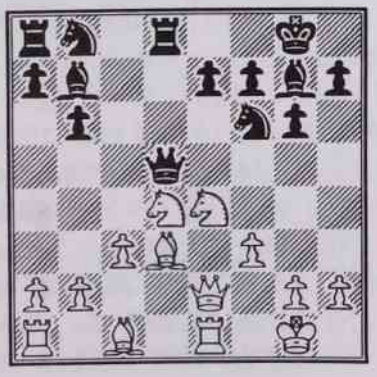
Position after 32. ... Kg7

33.Ne5 fe 34.Qe5+ Kh7 35.Bg8+ Kg8 36.Qe7 Bf1 37.Rf8+ Rf8 38.Qd6 Bd3 39.Qf8+ Kf8 40.cd Kf7 41.e5 a6 42.Kg1 b5 43.ab ab 44.Kf2 Kg6 45.Ke3 Kf5 46.d6 Ke6 47.d4 c4 48.d5+ Kd7 49.Kd4 h5 50.Kc5 h4 51.e6+ Kd8 52.d7 Kc7 53.d6+ Kd8 54.Kc6 resigns

1 - 0

Round 5 - August 24, 1996
Matt Puckett Mauricio Ruiz
Colle System (ECO A48)

1.d4 c5 2.e3 Nf6 3.Nf3 g6 4.Bd3 Bg7 5.O-O O-O 6.Nbd2 d5 7.c3 b6 8.e4 cd 9.Nd4 de 10.Ne4 Bb7 11.Qe2 Qd5 12.Re1 Rd8 13.f3 *(diagram)* **13. ... Ng4 14.fg e5**



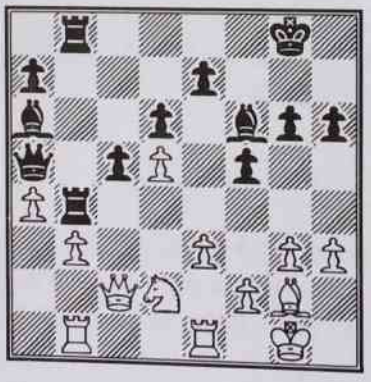
Position after 13. f3

15.Bg5 ed 16.Bd8 Qd8 17.Rad1 Nc6 18.Ba6 Ba6 19.Qa6 Qc8 20.Qc8+ Rc8 21.Nd6 Rd8 22.Ne4 Be5 23.g3 h6 24.Kg2 f6 25.cd Nd4 26.Nc3 Rc8 27.Rc1 Rc5 28.Ne2 Nc2 29.Rh1 Bb2 30.Rb1 Ba3 31.Rb3 Rd5 32.Kf3 Rd2 33.Rf1 Bc5 34.Rfb1 draw

1/2 - 1/2

Round 6 - August 24, 1996
J. Mont-Reynaud Matt Puckett
Dutch Defense (ECO A87)

1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nf3 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 O-O 6.O-O d6 7.d5 Na6 8.Be3 Bd7 9.Nc3 c5 10.h3 Nc7 11.Nd2 b5 12.cb Nb5 13.Nb5 Bb5 14.a4 Ba6 15.Rb1 Qa5 16.b3 Rab8 17.Re1 Rb4 18.Qc2 Rfb8 19.Bg5 h6 20.Bf6 Bf6 21.e3



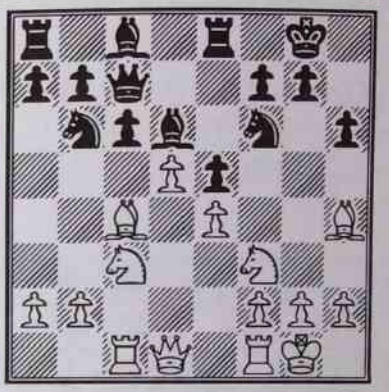
Position after 21. e3

21. ... c4 22.Nc4 Bc4 23.bc Rb2 24.Qd3 Qb4 25.Rbc1 Qa4 26.e4 R8b3 27.Qd1 Qb4 28.ef Qc5 29.Rc2 Rc2 30.Qc2 Rb2 31.Qe4 Qf2+ 32.Kh2 gf 33.Qe6+ Kg7 34.Rg1 Re2 35.Qd7 Bd4 36.resigns

0 - 1

Round 7 - August 25, 1996
Matt Puckett H. Akopyan
Trompowski (ECO D52)

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 d5 3.e3 Nbd7 4.c4 c6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nf3 Bd6 7.Bd3 h6 8.Bh4 O-O 9.O-O Qc7 10.Rc1 dc 11.Bc4 Re8 12.e4 e5 13.d5 Nb6



Position after 13. ... Nb6

14.dc Nc4 15.Bf6 bc 16.Qe2 a5 17.Qc4 Ba6 18.Nd5 Qb8 19.Qc6 Bf1 20.Kf1 Qb2 21.Be7 Be7 22.Ne7+ Kh7 23.Nf5 Qa2 24.Nd6 Red8 25.Ne5 Qd2 26.Nef7 Rf8 27.Qc2 Qc2 28.Rc2 a4 29.Ra2 a3 30.e5 Rfb8 31.Nc4 Rb3 32.e6 Re8 33.Ra3 Rb1+ 34.Ke2 Re6+ 35.Nfe5 Rb5 36.Re3 Rc5 37.f4 Ra6 38.Kf3 Kg8 39.Rd3 Rc7 40.f5 Ra1 41.Rd8+ Kh7 42.Ng6 Rf1+ 43.Ke3 Rf5 44.Nce5 resigns

1 - 0

4.5 - 2.5!

Columbus Day Scholastic *by Dale Robbins*

The crosstables of this well-attended event appeared in the previous issue of Antics (p. 24). This news story is taken from Ken Sloan's ACF WWW site - Ed.

I've been told by a respected educator that a chess game was instrumental in getting Columbus permission to sail to the Americas. How appropriate it turned out to be that the Scholar Mates Chess Team should host the Columbus Day Scholastic. The 3 section tournament (K-3, K-6, K-12) was held at the 1st United Methodist Church of Centerpoint, Al. Fifty-nine participants registered, attached participant ribbons to their shirts, and enthusiastically attempted to make a discovery of their own over the chessboard ... preferably a discovered mate!

As a sailor, Columbus would have appreciated the beautiful weather provided for us. However, only one participant, Ethan Balch (K-6) had smooth sailing this day by handily dispatching all opponents resulting in a perfect 5.0 score. The 4 places following Ethan each proudly displayed 4.0 scores. Section K-3 trophies were decided on tie-breaks as the top 5 contenders each obtained hard-fought 4.0 scores. K-12 was the smallest section, but still provided plenty of competitive entertainment as the top 3 places were decided on tie-breaks.

Springville Road Library donated 7 chessbooks of various titles as consolation prizes. These were provided to those who were squeezed out of placing in their section ... Or in the words of that grade philosopher, Maxwell Smart, "Missed it by that much". In section K-3, Carrie Stayer, Katie Dunne, and Mason Williams picked out the book of their choice. Lewis Lehe, David Hall, and Marshall Young were book winners in K-6. Albert Lassiter, K-12, picked up the last book.

Remaining participants scoring better than 50% received a Certificate of Honorable Mention and a USCF bumper sticker proclaiming "Push Pawns, Not Drugs." From K-3, awardees were Jacklyn Nagle, Sturgeon Christie, and Nathaniel Chamdler. Travis Briles, Joseph Kervin, Sam Thompson, Lee Martin and Jack Gerrity represented winners from K-6.

Trophies were awarded as follows:

	K-3	K-6	K-12
1st place	Joseph Chaffee	Ethan Balch	Warren Robbins
2nd place	Uche Afrika	Hamilton Simpson	Demian Delorenz
3rd place	Nathan Hall	Brennan Young	Roy Martin
4th place	John Watts	Sebastian Delorenz	Peter Summer
5th place	John Killian	Sophie Cooper	M. Early-Sorrels
Best unrated	Peter Petroff	Kendra King	Adam Stranahan
Best team	Advent Episcopal (Birmingham)	Advent Episcopal (Birmingham)	Holy Spirit (Huntsville)

Many compliments have been received concerning the facilities, support workers, the TD performance, and how smooth everything went. Much of these accolades go to my registration volunteers and my fellow TD's, Ken Sloan and Vasha Rosenblum. I was feeling downright cocky until this little blond-haired cherub tugged on my sleeve and gave me this comment, "Next time, order more Coke!"

Leaving Your Rating Plateau *by Bill Melvin*

Pull out your current issue of *Chess Life* and a three-year old issue. Are the first two numbers of your rating the same? If so, then congratulations, you have reached your chess peak. You are unlikely to improve much and should take up another activity. Bowling is nice. Lacrosse, sewing, bungee jumping, calligraphy, and camel riding also come to mind.

What's that? You still enjoy chess a great deal and have no intention of ever giving it up? You think you could improve and leave your plateau behind if only you knew how?

Well, I'm on your side. Here are some general guidelines:

1 The only way to improve is to change the way you play. Don't worry about rating points or making changes for the worse. You can always change back.
2 Improvement requires an investment of time. Learn to enjoy this time investment and you will improve effortlessly.
3 A balance between studying and playing must be achieved. You can't learn everything through experience. Homework must be graded under battle conditions. All work and no play makes Jack(ie) a dull boy (girl). All play and no work just doesn't work out too well for Jack(ie) either.

Here is an improvement plan tailored just for you! Simply get a crayon and mark through all of the 'things' you currently do to improve. You can still do these, but they don't get you any credit for this experiment. What remains are activities which you can pursue to improve your chess.

In no particular order, here are some ways to improve at chess:

1 Play postal chess.
2 Play chess over the internet.
3 Play postal chess over the internet.
4 Play blitz chess.
5 Play slow games against a computer.
6 Play blitz games against a computer.
7 Join a local chess club.
8 Help run a local chess club.
9 Read books on openings.
10 Read books on middlegames.
11 Read books on endings.
12 Read tournament books.
13 Subscribe to a chess magazine in addition to *Chess Life*.
14 Get a chess database.
15 Take chess lessons.
16 Give chess lessons.
17 Make your own chess set.
18 Adopt entirely new openings.
19 Play an entire tournament on intuition.
20 Play an entire tournament without intuition.
21 Watch instructional chess videotapes.
23 Write a chess article.
24
23 Annotate your games.
24 Annotate someone else's games.
25 Play blindfold.
26 Give a simul.
27 Play in a simul.
28 Do post mortems of your games with your opponent.
29 Listen to your opponent during the post mortem. Decide afterwards whether you were wrong on points where your disagreed.
30 Develop an improvement plan for yourself.
31 Develop an improvement plan for someone else.
32 Write down your entire opening repertoire.
33 Have a computer analyze your entire opening repertoire.
34 Perform a statistical analysis of your results. Keep a separate chart for different openings, colors, and ratings. This should point to areas for improvement.
35 Teach someone how to play chess who has never played.
36 Play up in a higher section (but not every time).
37 Decide upon a favorite historical player and study this person's games.
38 Decide upon a favorite modern player and study this person's games.
39 Learn chess history.
40 Have fun playing chess!

Alabama State Chess Champions
by Bobby N. Edwards

The author is a five-time Huntsville Chess Champion and has been a member of the Huntsville Chess Club since 1972. He is currently working on a book "Southern Chess" that will chronicle the history of the Royal Game in the Alabama region.

Mr. Edwards' mailing address is [redacted] *and his E-mail address is* [redacted] *Please get in touch with him if you have information or documentary material (e.g. ,old tournament crosstables) that you think might be helpful as he prepares his manuscript.*

The Alabama State Championship is the most important tournament of the year for most Alabama players. Played over the Labor Day weekend in September of each year, it always draws a good crowd. Begun in 1954, the Alabama Championship was started not long after the formation of the Birmingham Chess Club. The first State Champion was Gordon C. Bates. The Championship was held every year in Birmingham back then, sponsored by the Birmingham Chess Club and the USCF affiliate Alabama Chess Association until it was superseded by the Alabama Chess Federation. The ACF has rotated the tourney from city to city since the 1972 Open in Montgomery. Mobile was chosen in 1978 and it wasn't until 1993 that the event came to Huntsville. Below is a nearly complete listing of State Champions up to the present along with their hometowns. I would welcome information that removes any of the ???'s from the table!

Alabama Chess Champions		
Year	**Champion(s)**	**Hometown(s)**
1954	Gordon Bates	Birmingham
1955	???	???
1956	Brad Gambrell	Birmingham
1957	Ken Williamson	Mobile
1958	???	???
1959	???	???
1960	Dr. Rodney Baine	Birmingham
1961	Brad Gambrell	Birmingham
1962	Milan Momic	Leighton
1963	Milan Momic	Muscle Shoals
1964	Brad Gambrell	Birmingham
1965	Gordon Bates	Birmingham
1966	Milan Momic	Muscle Shoals
1967	Marty Appleberry	Huntsville

1968	Charles Cleveland	Birmingham
1969	Milan Momic / Charles Irvine	Muscle Shoals / Huntsville
1970	Charles Irvine	Huntsville
1971	Don L. Whaley	Birmingham
1972	Ken Williamson	Huntsville
1973	Charles Irvine	Huntsville
1974	Charles Irvine	Huntsville
1975	Elias Antonas	Tuscaloosa
1976	Steve Hudson	Birmingham
1977	Dr. Fredrich Bittner	Mobile
1978	Robert Jurjevich	Bay Minette
1979	Steve Hudson	Birmingham
1980	Steve Hudson / Joe Jurjevich	Troy / Bay Minette
1981	Kyle Therrell	Fairfield
1982	Stuart Rachels / Kyle Therrell	Birmingham / Fairfield
1983	Stuart Rachels/ Tom Denton	Birmingham / Mobile
1984	Stuart Rachels	Birmingham
1985	Stuart Rachels	Birmingham
1986	Stuart Rachels	Birmingham
1987	Tom Denton / Kyle Therrell	Mobile / Midfield
1988	Mark Walton	Hoover
1989	Joe Jurjevich	Bay Minette
1990	Bill Melvin	Huntsville
1991	Hisham Sunna / Charles Meidinger	Tuscaloosa / Madison
1992	Kyle Therrell / Bill Melvin / Charles Meidinger	Birmingham / Huntsville / Madison
1993	Scott Godfrey	Madison
1994	Charles Meidinger	Madison
1995	Bill Melvin / Kyle Therrell / Andrew Whatley	Huntsville / Birmingham / Montgomery
1996	Brent Inman / Rhodes Peele	Mobile / Montgomery

First Sunday Quads *by Kenneth Sloan*

(October)

After one month off for the State Championship, Birmingham's First Sunday Quads returned with a full complement of 18 players - three quads and a hexagonal.

For the second consecutive time, Organizer / TD / Player Kenneth Sloan had James Dreading crushed - and ended up losing. Dreading cheerfully accepted the gift, acquiesced to a draw with Jeff Story (in mutual time pressure), and flagged Wallace Fard to finish in clear first. Sloan was dead lost against Story - but sought complications and got lucky.

In the second quad, David Sloan confirmed his recent good results by cruising to a perfect score, a 1600 performance rating, and his first (projected) rating in the 1300's. Richard Ellis defeated everyone except David, and Roger Kernodle beat your Brennan Young.

Brennan's dad Thomas finally hit his stride, and had a perfect score in the third quad. He was competing against the cream of a brand new crop of players brought to the event by Wallace Fard and the Osiris chess club.

The last six players (all from Orisis CC) played three rounds of a Hex.

(November)

A grand total of 29 players appeared ready to play in the November 1996 issue of Birmingham's First Sunday Quads. There were 28 just as play started, but Richard Ellis appeared at the last minute and bumped TD / Organizer Kenneth Sloan from the top quad. The other late arrival, still in his soccer uniform, was John Morcos. John ended his game with Richard with one extra pawn, but it was a useless rook pawn. Kyle Therrell gave three lessons (ho hum), and Michael Schaetzle defeated Ellis to stay out of last place. Kyle's clear win was one of 6 (out of 7 quads). Clear winners receive free entries to future First Sunday Quads events. A lot of players will play for free next month!

In the second Quad, David Sloan had to swindle Wallace Fard (and then flag him in a KRkb ending) to finish with his second consecutive perfect score, picking up more than 50 rating points. Jacob Weiss and newcomer John Perham traded wins with Fard to finish in a three-way tie for second.

The third quad had yet another perfect 3.0 score - this time from Roy Martin, over Daniel Weiss, Philip Norton, and Brennan Young. Roy joined the "50+ club", picking up a pile of rating points.

The fourth quad had Chris Hocutt, Steve Ward, and Kendra King knotted at 2.0. Kendra King joined the "50+ club" with a 59 point rating gain. April Newton struggled.

In quad 5, Israel Solomon drew with Willie Barr and beat Paul Shine and Atarah Dudley. Willie and Paul drew a KRk ending (study endings, Willie!). Atarah had a great time - but no points.

Thomas Young (AKA Brennan Young's dad) demolished Brian Turner, Tinna Dudley, and Brandon Newton. Thomas gained an estimated 60 rating points, to pull ahead of Brennan. Next month he may have to play in the same Quad. Then we'll see who the family champion is!

Yet another perfect sweep in the seventh and last quad, this time by James Hocutt. Ronley Ashley finished with 2 points. Beverly Ashley and Nikita Williams entertained the entire room with their running commentary. Their individual game ended appropriately in a draw.

South of the Salt Line *by Jack C. Mallory*

The most common action in chess down on the coast has been in our Mobile-Baldwin County Scholastic Chess League. A total of 15 schools fielding 27 five player teams met for the third of six rounds in December. Clark School of Mathematics and Science, one of our four middle schools and the 1996 Alabama State Scholastic Team champions, defeated the Alabama School of Mathematics and Science, the 1995 Alabama State Scholastic Team Champions. This was ASMS's first defeat in three years of League and State competition! Clark will meet McGill-Toolen High School, the only other team with a perfect score this season, in the January round.

The 4th Annual Mobile City Championship, a for fun unrated, G/30 six round tournament with prizes based on age, drew 41 contestants aged from 9 to 73. Paul Choate from Pensacola won the championship with a score of 5.5, defeating Alabama state Champion Brent Inman and drawing with Joe Hodge.

The **Alabama Chess Federation** (ACF) is the United States Chess Federation (USCF) affiliate for the state of Alabama. Membership is open to any interested individual or organization by paying the annual membership dues. Please support Alabama chess by **joining** or **renewing** your annual membership in ACF. Benefits of membership include a subscription to the quarterly publication *Alabama Chess Antics.*

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